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Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00
INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 MC-02
ACDA-07 OMB-01 TRSE-00 IGA-02 AID-05 /067 W
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O R 091159Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2179
INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
AMEMBASSY DACCA
AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: MASS, PK, US
SUBJECT: A-7 ISSUE: GOP DOGFIGHT WITH ASGHAR KHAN

REF: ISLAMABAD 5910

1. RESPONDING QUICKLY TO PNA LEADER ASGHAR KHAN'S PRESS STATEMENT ON JUNE 7 CRITICIZING BHUTTO FOR THE US DECISION TO CANCEL THE SALE OF A-7 AIRCRAFT TO PAKISTAN (REFTEL), A FOREIGN OFFICE SPOKESMAN, IN STATEMENT CARRIED IN JUNE I PRESS, STATED THAT THE AIR MARSHAL'S REMARKS ON THE SUBJECT CONSTITUTED AN "OVERSIMPLICATION OF THE ISSUE." THE SPOKESMAN NOTED THAT THE SALE HAD BEEN UNDER DISICUSSION WITH THE US FOR MORE THAN TWO AND ONE-HALF YEARS, DURING WHICH TIME THE PRIME MINISTER AND OTHERS HAD ARGUED THAT THE A-7 WAS NEEDED TO BOLSTER PAKISTAN'S DEFENSES.
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HOWEVER, PAKISTAN WAS RECENTLY INFORMED BY THE US THAT THE SALE HAD BEEN TURNED DOWN BECAUSE, (1) THE US WISHES TO REDUCE ITS TOTAL ARMS SALES ABROAD AND (2) THAT IT DOES NOT WISH TO BE THE FIRST TO INTRODUCE A NEW KIND OF ADVANCED WEAPONS SYSTEM INTO A REGION. THE SPOKESMAM ADDED THAT AN ADDITIONAL REASON, ACCORIDING TO THE NEW YORK TIMES, WAS THAT THE SALE WOULD UPSET THE BALANCE OF POWER IN SOUTH ASIA.

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3. CHIDING THE AIR MARSHAL FOR HIS LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF THE ISSUE, THE SPOKESMAN NOTED THAT SUPERPOWERS CONCEIVE OF THE BALANCE OF POWER IN SOUTH ASIA IN TERMS OF MANY CONSIDERATIONS OTHER THAN MILITARY STRENGTH, SOME OF WHICH THE PRIME MINISTER HAD MENTIONED THE OTHER DAY. (A REFERENCE, WE ASSUME, TO BHUTTO'S COMMENTS THAT DESAI'S ELECTION AND GOP RESOLVE ON THE REPROCESS-ING PLANT ALSO PLAYED A PART IN OUR TURNDOWN.) HE QUOTED THE AIR MARSHAL'S STATEMENT THAT HE MIGHT BE ABLE TO CONVINCE THE US TO PROVIDE THE A-7 WHERE THE BHUTTO GOVERNMENT HAD FAILED, REMINDING HIM THAT A SUPERPOWER'S FOREIGN POLICY IS DETERMINED BY ITS SELF-INTEREST AND NOT BY THE KIND OF CONSIDERATIONS ASGHAR HAS IN MIND.

3. IN AN EDITORIAL ON JUNE 9 ENTITLED "A DISRUPTIVE ROLE," THE PAKISTAN TIMES CRITICIZED THE AIR MARSHAL FOR HIS "AMATEURISH STATEMENT ON FOREIGN POLICY." THE EDITIORIAL ACCUSED HIM OF BEING NAIVE, CLAIMING HIS PRAISE OF THE CARTER GOVERNMENT TENDED TO ENDORSE OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE IN PAKISTAN'S AFFAIRS. WHAT SPECIAL EQUATION DOES ASGHAR KHAN HAVE WITH WASHINGTON THAT IT SHOULD CHANGE ITS POLICY ON ARMS SUPPLY AND NUCLEAR PROLIF-ERATION FOR HIS SAKE, IT CONCLUDED.

4. LEFT-WING COLUMINST SAFDAR MIR ("ZENO") WARNED THE AIR MARSHAL IN A PAK TIMES ARTICLE ON THE OP-ED PAGE THE SAME DAY THAT HIS BOLD CHAMPIONSHIP OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S NEW FOREIGN POLICY WOULD EMBARRASS THE PNA. NO PARTY, HE ASSERTED, CAN AFFORD TO SUPPORT A FOREIGN POLICY WHICH EXTOLS US ACTIONS AND INTENT-IONS REGARDING PAKISTAN AND SOUTH ASIA, LOADED AS THEY ARE IN
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FAVOR OF OUR TRADITIONAL ENEMY (INDIA). WHAT THE AIR MARSHAL HAS TERMED A "REFRESHING CHANGE," MIR OBSERVED, IS NO CHANGE AT ALL, BUT SIMPLY A CONTINUATION OF THE "WORLD POLICEMAN" ROLE THE US HAS PLAYED FOR THE LAST 25 YEARS. HE ADDED THAT HIS KEENNESS TO DENOUNCE BHUTTO'S HANDLING OF THE A-7 ISSUE MAKES HIM A DEFENDER OF THIS WELL ESTABLISHED US POLICY.

5. DESPITE THE MFA'S SPEEDY REBUTTAL OF ASGHAR KHAN, THE GOVERN-MENT SHIED AWAY FROM ANY DIRECT CRITICISM OF THE U.S. THE MFA SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENT WAS GENERALLY OBJECTIVE, NON-CONTENTIOUS AND FACTUAL. SUCH TACTFUL TREATMENT OF THIS SENSITIVE ISSUE IS A FURTHER INDICATION THAT BHUTTO IS TEMPERING HIS PUBLIC APPRAOCH TO THE U.S., IF NOT TO THE AIR MARSHAL.
CONSTABLE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
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Sent Date: 09-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
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Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
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Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 ISLAMABAD 5910
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2217648
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: A-7 ISSUE: GOP DOGFIGHT WITH ASGHAR KHAN
TAGS: MASS, PK, US, (BHUTTO, ALI), (KHAN, ASGHAR)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/84331782-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
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